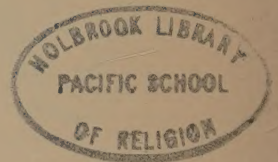




# The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

● AUGUST 1972



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# Checking on Concerns of the Congregations

One of the papers presented by the Evaluation Panel to the 'Silver Jubilee Synod' was on 'Social Concerns'. It has been printed last in the series of panel reports reproduced in the *Churchman* because it is hardly an *evaluation*. Instead, as it was frankly admitted by the author, Dr. R. Paulraj, it was an exposition of the theology and the scope of social service and action in our Church. It was a good, useful and timely exposition, but it was evident that there had been scarcely anything by way of activities of social concern in the CSI as such to *evaluate*. This was also underlined, as it were, by the words 'Nil Report' under Social and Economic Concerns Committee' in the printed booklet containing the 'Draft Reports' which was also given to members of the Synod at Tambaram.

A Nil Report usually means that a report was received, but that it said that there was nothing to report. It is possible, however, that the phrase was used by the compilers of the Draft Reports to mean that no report had been sent. Dr. Paulraj abandoned the task of evaluation with the observation that the social concern of the Church of South India was mainly expressed through institutions, but that another panel report was taking care of them. Dr. Paulraj and other Christian thinkers and writers lay a great deal of emphasis today on the Church as the Body for others given form and direction by the Man for others. Any Church that failed to be such a body would, therefore, be denying its own nature and function. Elsewhere in these columns is printed also a copy of the CIS Treasurer's Report presented to the Synod Assembly in January this year. In so far as that Report shows what funds are set apart or *not* set apart for expenditure on those outside the Church, it could also serve as a valuable index of the practical expression of social concern in the CSI as a whole. In the same way the article on the survey of technical schools in the CSI would also be a measure of it.

It is possible that both Dr. Paulraj and whoever ought to have written the report of the Social Concerns Committee thought only in terms of the work at the Synod 'level' and did not know or try to find out what was being done in the dioceses and their parishes. But the CSI is both what it is as a whole Church and what it is as dioceses, congregations, institutions and individuals. So any evaluation, to be reliable, should take into account both what is being done by the 'Synod' and what is achieved by the congregations all over South India. And the purpose of this Editorial is to plead for self-evaluation at the 'grass roots level' which must go alongside of and inform the CSI self-study.

Last month I suggested that the CSI might arrange for a network of self-study panels all over the dioceses of the CSI to check on the different aspects of the work of the CSI, especially as provided for in the Constitution. Among the Israelites and in different periods of the history of the Church such an evaluation was usually done by prophets. But in our new understanding of ourselves as a Church both the priestly and prophetic ministries belong to all of us. Hence it is necessary that each diocese and congregation should be examining its own life and work, especially in this year of Jubilee.

We live in an age when people are thought to be self-indulgent and averse to any self-examination and also without any standards by which to undertake it since the old norms have been repudiated. And yet, ironically enough, to judge by the popularity of self-evaluation features run by



magazines, men and women the world over would appear to be eager to rate themselves as women of charm or men of good political sense or people with a good 'word-power' or anything else. Perhaps these are rather frivolous essays in self-evaluation where the score a person gives himself for each point by answering 'yes' or 'no' may itself be wrong because this may be based on defective self-understanding. But the method itself is valuable and can be adopted by the Church with advantage, but with the aim, not of giving ourselves a score, but of finding out our strengths and weaknesses, our failures and successes so that we can learn how best to plan and carry out fresh or further efforts. It may be an encouragement that such self-studies have already been made in several Christian Colleges and in the Cathedral Parish of Nagpur.

I shall now give a sketch for a questionnaire which can be supplemented, adapted or substituted altogether for use in every diocese and congregation. As I suggested last month, there could be quite a few different groups studying different aspects of the life and work of their congregation, institution or diocese or any unit of it, especially as the 'Church for others'. It would be only too easy to find any number of reasons for saying that such self-examination is not necessary or cannot be done. But that would be doing exactly the same thing as the Pharisees who killed the Prince of Life because of preoccupation with a religion that had no place for self-examination and for thinking out the significance of God and of faith in Him for everyday life and behaviour.

The questionnaire given below concerns every member of a parish or congregation, but, in so far as they have deliberately assumed responsibility for the whole parish or congregation it should in a special way be the concern of presbyters, secretaries and members of committees in every Congregation.

## FOR PARISHES AND CONGREGATIONS

### 1. Nurture

- a) What are the provisions for teaching in your congregation or parish?
- b) Is the teaching based on an understanding of religion as being relevant to all the affairs of men in this world and to the whole of a man's life and activities?
- c) Are those who take part in this teaching ministry trained to make such a presentation of the Christian religion, or do they merely repeat or expound traditional dogmas?
- d) What are the other provisions for enabling the members of your congregation, and particularly the younger ones, to grow in the faith, to serve their fellowmen and to bear witness to the truth and the power of the Gospel?
- e) What kind of religion is inculcated in the homes and families? Is it the kind that encourages avoidance of



contact with the society around, or one that will help members of Christian families to change their environment for good without being corrupted by it themselves?

f) Are there any special study or discussion groups where those who are interested may exchange their thoughts and problems with others and do some collective thinking?

g) Is there any provision made for a library and reading room? Do you (if you are a preacher) refer to books in sermons to encourage people to read them?

h) Do you yourself read books which bring new theological insights and might help in planning the activities of your congregation?

i) How much time does your presbyter (or do you, if you are the presbyter) set apart every week for the teaching ministry to any groups in your congregation?

## 2. Worship

a) What do you consider to be the object of worship?

b) What do the members of your Congregation get out of worship? Have you tried to find out?

c) Are the worshippers in your congregation merely passive during worship, joining only in the responses and the singing?

d) Has any attempt been made to find out from the Congregation how, in their opinion, the worship services may be made more meaningful or satisfying to them?

e) While the worship may bring consolation and peace of mind, to the Christian worshipper, does it also become a power-house for him to act boldly and effectively as a Christian in his life and work during the week days?

f) Does the intercession in the course of worship take note of the needs, the problems, the persons in authority, voluntary agencies and other significant factors in the immediate environment of the parish or congregation?

## 3. Fellowship

a) Is your parish really a place of true Christian fellowship? What would you claim as the evidences or expressions of such fellowship?

b) Is the fellowship one that transcends caste, class and other common social barriers? What should fellowship mean in the context of economic inequality and social diversity?

c) Are elections conducted in a spirit of fellowship to ensure good representation and the entrusting of responsibility to competent men, or are they mainly a matter of struggle for power among those who crave for prominence or among different social groups?

d) What expressions of concern are there on the part of those who are well-to-do and those who belong to a particular caste for those who are poor and those who belong to other castes?

## 4. Service

a) What are the different kinds of service undertaken by your congregation as a whole or by groups within it? What organizations have been formed?

b) What encouragement or exhortation is given to members of the Congregation to serve those in different kinds of need?

c) What challenge is presented to the members of the congregation to regard their daily work primarily as a vocation to serve? Are they helped to explore their responsibility as Christians in their respective spheres of work?

d) Are the members of the Congregation helped to understand that there is a Christian calling to them to social action—to exercise a reforming and purifying influence on the local structures of society and government (social

clubs or associations, citizenship councils, panchayats, municipalities, etc.)? Are there instances of the Christian conscience being disturbed enough by social evils or particular social injustices to motivate action by Christian groups?

e) What co-operation is there between your congregation and voluntary agencies or government agencies for the work of rural reconstruction, prevention of diseases, slum clearance, co-operative societies, family planning, etc.?

## 5. Witness

a) What is the understanding of witness in your Congregation?

b) What evangelistic efforts are made? In what sense, and to what extent, can they be regarded as 'witness'?

c) What is the prevailing attitude on the part of your parishioners towards other religions?

d) Do members of your congregation ever try to find out whether their neighbours who hold other religious faiths have any spiritual experiences and how their religions help them?

e) Has your Congregation been challenged to give a better witness to Jesus Christ in faith, righteousness and holiness or even to realise that if we were more Christ-like the world would be likely to consider Jesus Christ more seriously?

## 6. Centres for Initiative

a) Has the initiative for worthwhile action and self-expression to come always from the presbyter or 'the higher Committees'? Is initiative from others discouraged?

b) Is there provision for periodical Congregational meetings or meetings of representatives to welcome suggestions?

c) Would you like to install a 'suggestions box' somewhere for getting suggestions from those who might be too shy or different to meet the 'authorities' or to speak in public?

d) Could you form a 'thinking cell' in your congregation to go on thinking about relevant programmes for your congregation and the solution to problems arising in it?

e) What is being done to encourage the coming into existence of informal groups for discussion, Bible study, social work, social action, evangelistic work, etc.?

The questionnaire given above is meant to help any parish or congregation that would like to do some serious self-study and would like to get a few guidelines on how to go about it. It is, therefore, to be expected that the initiative for arranging to discuss it should be taken by the presbyters and other leaders of congregations. In as much as the ultimate justification for the existence of Synod and Diocesan Committees, Councils and Office-bearers is the encouragement, orientation and guidance in planning the activities at the 'grass roots' all of them also would do well to evaluate and re-organise their own work in the light of the replies that are likely to be made to such a questionnaire by the Congregations or parishes of the CSI. But, apart from this, the CSI and the Diocesan administrations have also responsibility for activities of their own which do not involve parishes or congregations as such—the running of institutions, relationship with missionary societies, administration of central funds, etc. Already, last month, they have been urged to do their own self-study in this year of jubilee. But if a questionnaire would be helpful, one could be included in the next number of the *Churchman*.

I shall be glad to receive any suggestions for surveys, or reports of ones actually undertaken, which, if they are likely to be of significance or value to others, can be published in the *South India Churchman*.



*Note.*—As has already been announced, there will be a special Number of the *Churchman* to mark the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the Church of South India. Since the celebration comes off in the last week of September,

and since the Number is expected to contain more than double the usual number of articles, the Number will be a joint one for September-October, 1972, and there will be no separate issue for September or October.

## The Social Concern of the Church\*

### I. Introduction

This brief paper is an attempt to review the social concern expressed in the life and work of the Church of South India. This review is done with a view to evaluate the social service rendered in the past, to consider the present situation and to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit for future direction. Since there is another paper dealing with institutions and their services, we shall limit ourselves to the social services in general perspective.

In the past, social service, in general, was thought of as relief measures undertaken to feed the hungry, to heal the diseased and to shelter the homeless. The social structure which caused social evils was not then questioned. Social service projects were undertaken by voluntary agencies with resources and good intentions.

After independence, the aim of social service agencies is to change the very structure of society so as to eradicate social evils. Hence, social service is no longer thought of as relief measure based on charity; it has come to mean social justice, which demands social change and social action. Moreover, social service, which had been the concern of voluntary agencies, has now become the responsibility of the nation as a whole. Hence, voluntary service agencies should cooperate with the national programmes of social service.

This means that Christians need 'to collaborate in service projects with non-Christians.' So, then, what is the theological basis of cooperation in social action between Christians and non-Christians? What is the Christian basis for social concern?

The New Testament thought 'on Service in relation to Evangelism on the one hand and the Christian Fellowship on the other, establishes a Biblical approach to the compelling fact of human social solidarity which is inclusive of Christians and non-Christians.' Further, Christ is the Agent and Goal of all creation and belief in the doctrine of creation is common to many religions. 'The basis for Christian social concern . . . lies in the fact that the whole creative and redemptive purpose of God as it is revealed in Christ concerns the world and man in it.

We can continue to believe that the *holy* and loving purpose of God rules in all the happenings of the world because of the facts of the Cross and Resurrection.' (Bishop Newbigin, quoted from 'Religion and Society', March, 1958).

We shall continue to look at the social concern in terms of inter-group tension, uplift of backward classes, the church as a caring and sharing society, and as a colleague with the nation in nation-building.

### I. Committee on Social Concerns

It is assumed that every diocese in the Church of South India has a committee on social concerns. It is recommended that one such committee be formed in dioceses where there is no such committee.

### II. Inter-Group Tension

Caste structure has been slowly disappearing because of the impact and cumulative effect of western scientific educa-

tion, Missionary movement, Gandhian movement, Dravida Kazhagam movement and the opportunities of living and working together in urban, industrial, secular cities.

Even though the caste structure as such is rather silent within the church, the caste spirit is very alive and boisterous. Perhaps, it is also true to say that the linguistic and racial prejudice is not entirely absent in the church. This is clearly seen in the preference of one's own caste, language and race in marriages, appointments and elections.

The caste spirit or linguistic and racial prejudice which restricts one's love and loyalty to one's own caste, language and race is one of the forces of evil which needs to be transformed by the Risen Christ into *agape*, deeper divine love which transcends caste, language and race. Christ had defeated in His resurrection all forms of evil including the caste spirit and the racial and linguistic prejudice and hence we believe that God can sublimate the caste-language-race-oriented society into an open human society.

Perhaps, God is already paving the way for this open human society through the possibilities of community living in urban, industrial, secular cities, which offer a possible social structure for transcending caste spirit and linguistic and racial prejudice.

*What are the practical projects which the Church of South India can undertake to help our caste-language-race-oriented society become more open and human?*

### IV. Uplift of Backward Classes

In the past, the Church had done a great deal for the uplift of the Christian converts from backward classes. They were given free education in church-related schools and colleges and employed in church-managed institutions. Thus the church had helped them to secure economic independence and had liberated them from the social tyranny of caste Hindus. Their economic independence achieved through education had given them a new social status and a new sense of dignity.

At present, Christians, in general, including Christians from backward classes, are considered to belong to forward communities and, hence, Christians from backward classes and their children find it extremely difficult to get educational and other concessions.

When Raman (from backward class) is baptized James, his poor hut cannot become a mansion overnight; his poverty does not change into plenty by the change of name; his economic condition remains the same. Since his children are denied educational fee concessions, because they happen to be Christians, they either backslide to their former religion or are afraid to declare themselves as Christians in public; (this happens in many cases); some continue to be faithful Christians to suffer hardship losing education and other concessions. We should raise this question:

Which is more in keeping with the spirit of a secular welfare country like India—awarding government concessions to people on the basis of economic need or on the basis of religion or caste?

*What can the Church of South India do to appeal to*

\* This is the Silver Jubilee Panel Report presented by Dr. R. Paulraj, a member of the Evaluation Panel.—Ed.



*the Government that recognition of need (regardless of religion or caste) in the matter of awarding government help is in keeping with the spirit of secular welfare India?*

### V. The Church: A Caring and Sharing Society

The Acts of the Apostles reminds us that one of the aspects of the Church is that it is a caring and sharing society. 'All whose faith had drawn them together held everything in common: they would sell their property and possessions and make a general distribution as the need of each required' (Acts 2:44-45). They contributed to their common possessions according to their ability and used it according to their need. They lived as a 'Church for others.'

Can we say that the Church of South India has been a church for others? Has it been a caring and sharing society or has it been a 'C.S.I. (Private) Ltd.,' pre-occupied with itself?

Perhaps the secular welfare government offers an opportunity to practise, 'from each according to his ability and to each according to his need'. This welfare state carries the possibility of becoming a caring and sharing society, caring for the welfare of all, producing the national wealth according to the skills of citizens and distributing it according to the needs of the people.

*What measures can the Church of South India take to lead the Government and the nation to a deeper awareness of their role as a caring and sharing society?*

### VI. Church and Nation: Colleagues in Nation-Building

In the past, the Indian church as a whole, except for a few individual Christians, was silent without taking part in the activities of the nation, for instance, the independence struggle. The Christian community on the whole presented a picture of Christians in exile within the mission compound.

Now, the church in India has been slowly emerging from her mission compound captivity to find her way in the wider context of the nation's development.

The hour has come for the Church in every part of India to recognise that it is high time for her to cross frontiers of rendering isolated social services here and there

into a vast field of nation-building through social change and social action. The Church has the responsibility of choosing important national issues of common concern and work out a Christian philosophy of social action. Development plans, increase in national production and equitable distribution, family planning, reconciliation between religious, communal and linguistic groups, evolving a more open and human society are some of the national issues for the social concern of the Church in India.

'Now a man who had been a cripple from birth used to be carried there and laid every day by the gate of the temple called 'Beautiful Gate,' to beg from people as they went in. When he saw Peter and John on their way into the temple, he asked for charity . . . . Peter said, 'I have no silver or gold; but what I have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk . . . he sprang up, stood on his feet and started to walk.'

(Acts 3:2-6)

Peter's social concern for the beggar was directed not towards helping him to be a beggar at the beautiful gate, but towards making him a new man; eradicating the very structure of his beggarly life, redeeming him from his chronic paralysis. The social concern of the church is directed towards leading the world towards a new society, the Kingdom of God, redeeming our world in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, from its chronic problem of sin and its consequences.

*What are the national issues in which the church in India could involve in the task of nation-building? What is the Christian basis of involvement in each of these issues? Can we draw up a programme of social action for all these areas of concern?*

### Conclusion :

The social concern of the Church is part of God's redemptive plan for our world.

'God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son, that everyone who has faith in him may not die but have eternal life. It was not to judge the world that God sent his Son into the world, but that through him the world might be saved.'

(John 3:16-17)

## Exploring Avenues of Employment

### How Many of the C.S.I. are Unemployed?

We do not know. . . .

But, the population continues its dramatic mushroom curve of expansion; the proportion of youth to the total population increases; traditional skills are changing fast; old restraints go, the countryside is losing out—the City calls. Levels of literacy are rising, education is expanding. Unemployment is growing.

Statistically, it is very difficult to assess the extent of unemployment in India. Some nationally-accepted figures hardly indicate a serious problem though numbers are large. From a percentage point of view, these statistics do not seem to indicate a worse problem than is currently being faced by countries like the United States of America and the United Kingdom. However, despite this reassuring statistical picture, we all know from personal experience that, for more and more people, there is practically no chance of a satisfactory job in Society.

Recently, fifty clerks' posts were advertised in Delhi—ten of which were temporary. Thirty-eight thousand people applied, 24,000 were graduates.

No nation, Church or individual is in a position to do all it or he would wish to, to tackle unemployment. Yet

it seems that, for us in the Church, the time is right to look again at our priorities and consider what our future must be in response to this national problem. For the past five years, there has been a growing concern in the Church to respond more creatively to this issue.

Many of you may be aware that the CSI Synod agreed in 1971 to the working of a Commission to analyse the training of the 15 Training Centres already established by the Church and to prepare guidelines for the Church's future involvement in the field of training youth with technical skills. A Survey Team was assembled and began its work at Tumkur, based at the C.S.I. Vocational Centre (though it has recently moved to Bangalore).

One of the first major decisions was to appoint an Advisory Body to guide the work of the Survey Team. This Body has met regularly under the Chairmanship of Mr. C. A. Cornelius, Managing Director and Chairman of the Indian Telephone Industries, Bangalore.

Shortly after beginning the Survey, a request was made to Dr. M. M. Thomas of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society in Bangalore, to hold a Consultation between sociologists, economists, theologians and heads of technical schools to consider the implications

[AUGUST 1972]



of their disciplines for technical training. The Consultation held in Madras between 19th and 21st August, 1971, was chaired by Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah, former Deputy Director-General of UNESCO, and supported by the World Council of Churches Commission on Development.

A second major step was to invite the Economics Department of Madras Christian College, under Dr. C. T. Kurien and Professor Josef James, to prepare a Socio-Economic Document with particular reference to man-power of the States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Kerala and Mysore. The Madras Consultation and the Socio-Economic Document have provided very valuable background data and guidelines for the Survey Team's present work.

As work has progressed, two dominant themes have arisen. The first is that it is no longer sufficient to prepare youth for jobs in industry, without considering the effect of that job on Society and on youth. For example, it is immoral to train a young man who, though given employment on completion of training, is exploited by a businessman—paying low erratic wages and forcing the young man to live in deplorable economic conditions. Accepting this in future, youth must be prepared, while learning technical skills required by a just society, to tackle creatively the social and economic pressures of injustices prevailing in the Community in which they find themselves.

The second dominant theme is that the Organized Industrial sector, based around cities, cannot expand fast enough to absorb youth being trained. Therefore, in future, we must establish training patterns which prepare youth in skills required for rural development, emphasising the special attitudes and skills needed to enable youth to become self-employed.

Out of the detailed analysis of the work of the existing Centres and of the socio-economic trends in Society, it has become clear that the changing needs of Society call for patterns of training not yet established either by the Church and other private bodies or by Government.

Based on the above understanding of the challenge now

facing the Church of South India, the Survey Team is preparing guidelines so that the leaders of the Church and those interested in these issues could reorient the existing centres and establish a number of new programmes.

Very briefly, there are three distinct features of the Survey.

Firstly, a detailed analysis, both administrative and financial, is being made of the working of each Centre. This will enable useful comparisons to be made between the costs of training in different centres related to standards.

Secondly, the Survey has conducted a publicity programme aimed at keeping informed many individuals, Churches and groups in India and abroad, with the views and findings of the Survey.

Thirdly, and the most difficult, the Survey hopes that its work will motivate the Church and individuals in sufficient numbers, to set out on the long road of tackling the great challenge posed.

The Church over the last 100 years, has played a very creative role in the development of general education and medical services in the country. We believe that the Church today should accept this new field of training youth with technical skills as one of its major challenges for the next fifty years.

To do this, the Church will have to reassess its priorities and possibly make genuine sacrifices in re-allocation of personnel and funds. We hope that the Survey, conducted on behalf of the Synod and the PLAN to be prepared by the Survey Team, assisted by the Advisory Body, will become a turning point for the Church as it struggles to respond to the challenge of training youth. Youth with technical skills demand of a new, just, Society.

Anyone interested in receiving our publicity material STOP ! etc., may please write to:—

The Co-Ordinator,  
CSI Survey on Technical & Vocational Training,  
49, Madras Sappers Officers' Colony,  
Banawadi, Bangalore-33.

Stop !

## The Jesus People

A. C. DHARMARAJ, *Secretary, Church of North India*

Among the many religious movements in the world today the most catching Christian movement is 'The Jesus Movement'. The Jesus people are variously described as 'Jesus Freaks', 'Jesus People's Army', 'Street Christians', 'Independent Churches of the North', 'The Pentecostals of the '70's', 'The Salvation Army of the 20th century', 'The Jesus Gangs', 'The Jesus Addicts' and 'The Jesus Pedlars'. This is one of the many spontaneous Christian movements which spring into action from the commitment of the youth who are satisfied neither with the liberals, who yell for involvement in the world, nor with the conservatives who scream for salvation, but who are satisfied only with those who hunger and thirst for liberation and fulfilment of the individual man, of the whole of man and of all men.

They are cropping up everywhere—Europe, Americas, Australia, U.K., and they are hoping to enter India. This movement has not yet crystallised into any organised pattern of work, but it 'catches' and spreads. It would need a more scientific study to delve into the genesis of this movement, but I may hazard a thought or two about this movement based on the meagre material that I have had access to and so I am subject to correction.

The Jesus People's Army was founded in America in 1969 and one of its present leaders is Arthur Blessitt, a Baptist. In 1969 Blessitt carried a huge wooden cross weighing about 50 kilograms, covering about 2,000 kilometers in the United

States of America, and in 1971 he walked across England, Scotland and Ireland including Belfast and Dublin affected by Catholic-Protestant tensions. It is interesting that in Belfast the Catholics also joined the Protestant-led peace-march of the Jesus People. Blessitt visits universities, colleges, prisons, market-centres, and thunders his message of Jesus and His People. He does not avoid street corners, strip-tease clubs, yellow-press stalls, and parks and picnic spots. He is planning presently a cross-carrying march to Europe with his wife and children.

Mr. Prabhu S. Guptara discerns at least four elements in this movement:—

- (i) Jesus People's Army;
- (ii) Christian Communes and groups, the best known of which is the Christian World Liberation Front at the University of California at Berkeley;
- (iii) The Catholic Pentecostals and other charismatic groups;
- (iv) Messianic Judaism, i.e., converted Jews, who claim to be still Jews in their heritage and work for the conversion of fellow-Jews.

Although they travel from place to place they are more numerous in the North Atlantic Community than elsewhere.



They believe that all mankind belongs to Jesus and are therefore the people whom Jesus gathers together. They do not identify themselves with any national or international or confessional or sectarian or schismatic groups. They believe in uniting all the People of Jesus under the renewing allegiance of Jesus. It is a missionary urge that propels them to base their proclamation on the Bible, and to adopt liturgical and sacramental forms of worship, not tied down to any one ritualistic order. They believe in the renewal of all Society, but they emphasise personal renewal as leading to the transformation of the world at large. Poverty is the first of their vows and chastity another.

These statements may appear to be clear-cut, but it is not easy to fix the whole movement along these lines; for, extremists also are there who 'fight for an unquestioned acceptance and literalistic use of the Bible, neatly dividing humanity into the heaven-bound and the hell-bound'. There are amongst them, as Albert Van Den

Henuvel reports, 'Jesus pedlars, who recognise the Gospel as another best-selling product. Jesus Christ Superstar is its glamorous symbol, and a multi-million dollar market of Kitsch sells anything from Jesus watches to Jesus ashtrays.'

This movement may be a medley of all these and more. But the people in it are not to be sneezed at. They are earnest and zealous and fired with a revolutionary dynamic to turn the world upside down. The Churches have taken sides. Some praise these people, some condemn them, some others watch in silence. Some churches are now beginning to permit their people 'to work with the Jesus movement.'

The Jesus movement is a challenge to all Churches. What is needed is recognition, understanding and critique so that established forms of static faith and order, and genuine outbreaks of dynamic faith and action may correct and strengthen each other. Only thus can any church discover its Mission.

## United Theological College Valedictory Service

'The Clergy should have the right sense of direction among the conflicting views of what the holy ministry is meant to be,' stated the Rt. Rev. Dr. Lesslie Newbigin. The Bishop was delivering the Valedictory address of the United Theological College on Sunday, 8th April 1972, at the Charles Ranson Hall.

Elaborating his theme, 'The Meaning of consecration', the Bishop explained the salient features of two models—the 'Pilgrim's Progress Model' and 'the Jonah Model' of the Christian life. The former model advises a Christian to keep away from the wicked world and the latter model advocates a Christian to be fully involved in the world.

According to Bishop Newbigin, 'If we are to get at the truth of the matter we have to go to the centre-point of our faith, to the Cross which was both the new exodus and also the point at which our Lord entered into the very heart of the world'. The Bishop explained the point still further in the following words: 'Being sent into the world as Jesus was, accepting and bearing to the limit all the pressures—not of some imaginary and idealised cross—but of the actual concrete circumstances in which you are placed, however sordid or trivial or meaningless they may seem to be; and—as a continually renewed interior act—allowing yourself to be wholly taken up into the consecration of Jesus so that the people of your parish may be likewise consecrated in the truth.'

The Bishop concluded his address by reminding the candidates who completed their course and were looking forward to ordination that the depth and fulness of their consecration to the Father will be the important criterion in judging the success of their ministry.

The Acting Principal, Dr. E. C. John, led the Valedictory Service. The Diplomas and Certificates to the Theological students were awarded by Dr. Chandran D. S. Devanesen, President of the College Council. Mr. S. A. Selladurai, President of the Bangalore Y.M.C.A., gave away the certificates to the Y.M.C.A. trainees on behalf of the National Council of Y.M.C.As of India. The function was attended by a large number of friends and well-wishers of the College.

As usual the leaving theological students constituted a very interesting group. Seven of them qualified for the Post-Graduate diploma, of whom two have since joined the teaching Staff in seminaries, one has gone to Germany for further studies, two were from overseas, and the remaining two have taken up important assignments in their Churches.

The 35 diploma holders in theology, 5 certificate holders and 6 Y.M.C.A. Secretaries represent eight denominations from different parts of India. Fourteen of them had spent two years of their theory training at Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Madras, and had joined U.T.C. in June 1972. They come from the different Lutheran Churches, the A.E.L.C., T.E.L.C., G.E.L.C. and the J.E.L.C. There were students from nine dioceses of the C.S.I. and also from Mar Thoma, Orthodox, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Anglican, C.N.E.I. and Mara Independent Evangelical Churches.

A day earlier, the College Council had met under the Chairmanship of Dr. Chandran D. S. Devanesen, President of the College Council. Twenty-five members attended the Council Meeting.

The Council discussed the important role of U.T.C. in relation to the Regional Theological Colleges. The U.T.C. Faculty, at the request of the Council, had studied this subject earlier and submitted its report. Within the whole pattern of theological education in India, it was felt that the U.T.C. should continue in its programme of, three levels of training, namely, (1) the inter-regional English medium B.D. programme, (2) the M.Th. programme, and (3) the Indian Theological Research Institute for doctoral and post-doctoral study and Research. While the regional colleges give training in regional language medium, the English Medium training opportunities at all levels of studies at U.T.C. should not be neglected. Advanced doctoral and post-doctoral study and research facilities in U.T.C. will be needed to help the Church in its task of interpreting the Gospels and in its mission in relation to different social, religious and cultural situations. With the complexity of religious and intellectual problems faced by people in their confrontation with modern religious and secular movements, they need a ministry with a high degree of spiritual commitment as well as intellectual ability and theological competence. There is a clear indication from the B.T.E. and the Senate of Serampore College that the U.T.C., Bangalore, will be a location for such an advanced programme for the Indian Church, which cannot afford more than one or two of such Centres.

The Council pointed out that the U.T.C. should also make greater efforts to meet the needs of Christian Colleges in the field of religious education. It should provide facilities for the Staff members of Christian Colleges to undergo special training, and thus help the Colleges maintain certain values.



## Financial Appeal

The Acting Principal, Dr. E. C. John, introduced the discussion on the Finance Appeal by emphasizing the need for relying on indigenous sources as far as possible and to raise a reasonable proportion of the capital and endowment needs from within India. The present financial needs of the College include Rs. 4,70,000 for the hostel extension, Rs. 3,81,500 for library extension and Rs. 33,00,000 for endowment.

The Council noted with satisfaction that over Rs. 12,000 had been received so far towards the proposed D.T. Niles lectureship.

The Council discussed the important matters connected with the developments of U.T.C.-Gurukul relationships and noted that, after the first phase of Gurukul-U.T.C. merger, both institutions are free to enter into the second phase of co-operation, namely, participation in the management of the institutions.

The important decisions on this subject were :

(1) The Council decided to respond to the Gurukul invitation to nominate one U.T.C. lecturer on their proposed Working Committee and also to request Gurukul to allow U.T.C. to nominate two representatives on their Working Committee.

(2) The Council also decided to make an appeal to the supporting bodies of U.T.C. to make greater use of the training facilities made available by Gurukul.

## Exchange of Lecturers between U.T.C. and other Seminaries and co-operation with the Ecclesiastical University of Bangalore

The Council noted with satisfaction that the exchange of lecturers between U.T.C. and R. C. Seminaries had proved to be an ecumenically fruitful attempt. The Council also accepted the following recommendations of the Executive Committee on the question of U.T.C. co-operation with the Ecclesiastical University of Bangalore.

(1) That the U.T.C. accept the invitation of the pro-syndicate of the proposed Ecclesiastical University of Bangalore to appoint a U.T.C. Committee to consider possible areas of co-operation.

(2) That the Rev. Dr. E. C. John, Dr. T. V. Philip and the Rev. Dr. H. Grafe (substitute, Rev. W. R. Pape) represent U.T.C. on the Committee for co-operation with the Ecclesiastical University. The Council noted that there already existed co-operation as regards mutual extension of library facilities and exchange of lecturers. Meeting together and deliberations of the subject departments at faculties of different seminaries were desired. The question of mutual recognition of each other's diplomas and degrees would be raised later. The Council accepted with appreciation and thanks the following awards of two scholarships:

(1) The Scholarship donated by Mr. and Dr. (Mrs.) H. E. Phillips will be of the value of Rs. 1,500 per annum, and will be available for an ex-Basel Mission area candidate from North Kerala Diocese. The Scholarship is donated in the first instance for a period up to five years.

(2) The Scholarship donated by Mr. Edwin Vasanthkumar will be of the value of Rs. 2,500 per annum and will be available for a period of one year in the first instance.

The Council suggested that U.T.C. should explore possibilities of organizing a training programme for Bangalore laity.

The Council co-opted the following as Council members:—

Prof. T. Reuben, Mr. K. M. Varghese Mappilai, Mr. S. A. Selladurai, Dr. M. M. Thomas and President S. W. Schmitthenner.

The following Office-Bearers were elected:—

*President* .. Dr. Chandran D. S. Devanesen.

*Secretary* .. Rev. A. P. Nirmal (till September 1973).  
.. Rev. Dr. E. C. John (from October 1973)

*Treasurer* .. Mr. T. J. Sellathurai.

*Executive* .. Prof. T. Reuben, Mr. K. M. Varghese Mappilai, Mr. S. A. Selladurai, Rev. Dr. C. D. Jathanna, Rev. Dr. E. C. John (from January 1973).

## A School of Sociology

'Social transition and Human Liberation in India' was the theme of a ten-day residential School of Sociology which was sponsored and run by the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Whitefield, Bangalore from 10-20 May, 1972. The theme was viewed from:—What are the dynamic forces at work?; Which are the institutions which are being overthrown?; What are the obstacles in the way of peaceful transition in our society?; What kind of a society is emerging in our country?; Will these social changes accelerate the process of Human Liberation in India?; Indianization; Quest for equality.

Dean of the school, Professor Hasan Askari, of Osmania University developed the theme from the point of view of social change as it is today. His thesis was: 'Change could be viewed as value, as challenge, as paradox. As value, it is a basis of revolution and reconstruction; as a challenge, a foundation of awareness of tradition; and as a paradox, it is an occasion of discovering the contradiction between change and continuity.

Mr. Charles Ryerson, of C.I.S.R.S. from Madurai, brought in the various dimensions of Modernization, Secularization and Crisis of Identity.

Sister Pauline Grutzner, Stella Maris College, Madras, dealt with the important issue of 'The Impact of education on Attitudinal change.' This was followed by other papers

on 'Education for Eradication of Under-development' and 'The Impact of Science on Religion'.

Professor M. A. Kalimulla of Christ College, Bangalore, brought into focus the different aspects of social change as different from social development.

Dr. Mathew Kurian, Member of Parliament from Kerala, spoke on 'Political Ideologies and Social Change' and also on the 'Principles of Culture Development'.

Some of the other topics under discussion were: Social Transition and Religious Minority Communities; The Indian Religious Mind and Secularism; Sociological forces in the question of population; Modern Indian trends in Literature; The Minorities' Image in India; Untouchability and Caste System.

The group went on to work on the various working papers and analysed the various social problems and in a way attempted to see how social change could be accelerated to bring about a balanced and well-integrated 'Development'.

The school was inaugurated by Mrs. E. E. Vaz, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies, Mysore State. The School was attended by a group of nearly thirty people from many parts of India which could be called a truly inter-religious gathering representing Hindus, Muslims and Christians.

Ecumenical Christian Centre,  
Whitefield, Bangalore.



# The Baptism of Jesus

OLIVE PAUL, Ootacamund

'Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptised of him and lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.'

(Matt. 3 : 13-17)

Jesus was now about 30 years of age having led a good and useful life as a man. He knew no sin though temptations assailed him and he was in the midst of a wicked world. He was not wholly conscious that he was the Son of God. God allowed it to be so and Jesus was directly under the observation of His Heavenly Father. Now and then something told him that he was more than a mere man as his utterance in the Temple would show, 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' St. Luke Ch. 2, V 49. Still with a human mother and relatives he had no occasion to regard himself as the Son of God.

The baptism by John gave him a new experience. The Spirit descending like a dove and lighting upon him and to hear God's voice claiming him as 'His beloved Son' was a new experience of kinship with his father, the Almighty God.

He wanted to know more about the implications and significance of being God's son as he had hitherto regarded himself only as a son of man. He sought a quiet place for meditation far from the maddening crowds. His meditation on the subject kept him for days and days without thought of food or comfort. During these days the Holy Spirit within him (possessed by every human being in a greater or smaller degree and to be exercised) helped him to understand the meaning of the sonship of God.

Jesus' life of service, his outstanding sermon on the Mount, his healing mission, his concern for the sinner, ('I came to seek the lost sheep'), his peaceful approach to the aggressor, his courage in upholding righteousness and denouncing hypocrites and ceremonial worship and his superseding the Jewish law by the law of Love, are all the outcome of the meditation in the wilderness on the sonship of God.

He was led by the Holy Spirit within him into the wilderness seeking more light on the implications of divine Sonship. It was only when he relaxed from his meditation that stark hunger, due to lack of food for forty days, faced him. The nature of the flesh within him, or the devil as we may otherwise call it, tempted him to take advantage of his newly acquired awareness of divinity. 'Command that these stones be made bread.' But the Holy Spirit within him said, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,' St. Matt. Ch. 4, V 4. He had a rich experience of this for 40 days in the wilderness. Hunger or thirst did not disturb him in the desert as he was immersed in deep meditation. His perfect under-

standing of the sonship of God made him understand that divinity was not to be exploited for selfish ends.

A second temptation to exhibit his divinity came to his nature of the flesh. Jerusalem, the Holy city with its Temple had an attraction for Jesus. If thou be the son of God cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Mat. Ch. 4, Vv. 5 & 6.

The Holy Spirit within him and the thoughts derived from the meditation in the wilderness made Jesus say, 'It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' Matt. Ch. 4, V 7. Casting himself down from that height wantonly to exhibit his divinity was tempting God, His Father. It would be either a distrust of God or a dishonour to Him.

The nature of the flesh within Jesus tempted him a third time with worldly pleasures. The kingdoms of the world and the pleasures thereof Jesus could have and put himself out of the reach of God's Kingdom by yielding to this temptation. But the Holy Spirit which was in him could never accept such pleasures as against pleasures of service to mankind prompted by God. Such service was rewarding and satisfying as against the pleasures of the world which would make one bow down one's head in shame. Jesus felt angry that a thought like this ever crept into his mind so that he said, 'Get thee hence, Satan.' 'Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' Then saith Jesus unto him, 'Get thee hence, Satan', 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.' Matt. 4, Vs. 8-10.

God was so pleased with His son for conquering all the temptations and realising the meaning and responsibility of the son of God—though in form he was human—that he sent his angels to minister unto him. Matt. Ch. 4, V 11. His strength came back to him and he went about his ministry of preaching, healing, training the disciples, conveying the meaning of the kingdom of God, the Love, and Wisdom of God, true worship, converting sinners unto him by forgiving, exercising compassion for the poor and hungry and doing all other service we read about in the Gospels. His life and example make manifest his divine Sonship.

—Contributed

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# Report on India Experiences

[Concluded from the last issue]

## III. Reflections and observations about our experience

a) The need for skilled training in counselling, communications and interpersonal relationships is very great. The professional training in Indian seminaries and universities offers very little training in skills. We were besieged by people individually and representing teaching staffs who wanted help in how to respond to troubled persons. Their previous training was either non-existent or entirely abstract and theoretical. One of the Counselling Centre students, a 59-year-old minister from a conservative denomination, went home for the Easter holidays, after six weeks at the Centre. He went straight to the house of a man who had become estranged some fifteen months earlier and withdrawn his whole family from the church. The minister did not take a 'no' from the people at the door but went straight in and found the man, sat down and said, 'I am here to listen to you.' The man was so astonished that he began to talk and two hours later, after they had mutually disclosed their feelings and frustrations the man stood and said, 'Pastor, I don't know what that Counselling Centre is doing, but that course has changed you. My family and I will be back in church on Easter Sunday.'

On Easter Sunday this 59-year-old minister, who had a whole new idea of himself and his own need to disclose where he was and who he was to his congregation, preached in such a manner that at the close of the service the president of the congregation stood up and said, 'It has been like a resurrection here today. Pastor, you are changed in your preaching.'

Part of the skill training which this man had undergone was an ability now to listen and to understand how people felt. Furthermore, he was free to disclose how he felt and to be honest with his people for the first time without merely playing a role and hiding behind his ministerial identity.

There is a great need for skill training in a variety of areas. The ones I would be most familiar with are the whole area of personal transformation, social transformation, communication and interpretative or theological skills which are not 'put on' other people but are ways of helping every one interpret and find meaning for his life.

b) We were amazed at how the Centre and our training programmes, when they paid attention to *skills* about counselling, listening and communication, and small group life, overcame obvious and radical theological differences. There were Roman Catholics and Protestants with a variety of viewpoints about biblical, theological interpretation including fundamentalists. If we focussed on these theological differences only an argument would emerge. But as the training course developed and we paid attention to each other, listening to feelings and the personal struggles of individuals then the concerns about theological interpretation vanished. It was not that we came to some easy theological agreement but rather that every theological viewpoint had to take the individual seriously and work with him in his uniqueness. We found our common humanness underneath theological differences. Some of our students at the Centre said that when they first arrived and discovered there were Roman Catholics in the course they almost went home. They had never had close contact with Roman Catholics. When they left the Centre eight weeks later they said, 'These Roman Catholics are better friends than my fellow ministers back home. We have come to

know each other in depth. We have become aware of our common humanity. We feel as if we belong to each other. We love each other.'

c) One of our own interests in going to another culture was to explore the differences between the West and the East. There are all of the obvious cultural and economic differences characterized most simply by the affluence of America and the poverty of India. Most of the trainees in the Counselling Centre lived on a very meagre budget with absolutely no affluence. We became aware that underneath both the American culture and the Indian culture there are root basic human needs and these are apparently the same for both cultures. Men, women, youth and children are angry, fearful, anxious, hurt and they need to be affirmed in their loveliness and their worthwhileness. We found the same kinds of feelings in our Indian friends as we find in our students and our peers in Chicago. The same kind of anger and fear about parents and authority figures emerges in both cultures. The same kind of hurt from interpersonal relationships emerges in both cultures. The same concern about 'if these people knew me they would reject me' appears in both cultures. The skills of reconciliation are needed in both cultures.

There are cultural overlays. For example, it is more difficult to own anger in the Indian situation. Yet when the group or one-to-one relationship became trustworthy then we heard the same kind of angry feelings which we have heard in America.

This underlying commonality gives us a great sense of hope that mankind does not need to be separated by surface cultural customs and taboos. There are differences in the existence situation of persons but there seems to be a common essence about all persons.

The recognition of this underlying commonality also gave us a sense of despair, not about India, but about America. Upon coming back to the United States it was apparent that all of our affluence—our gadgets, our mobility and our training—do not seem to have made the American any happier, more fulfilled, more complete than his poverty-stricken brother in India. Our priorities about technology are all wrong. We have not given priority to the human needs. Persons are no more 'saved' in this culture than they are in the Indian culture.

This common humanity meant that when we listened with understanding to the life space and the feelings of the Indian teachers and ministers and nurses there was no cultural barrier. When we did not put on them our interpretation but rather just listened to what they wanted to tell us then a bond quickly grew between us and the barrier of cultural differences seemed unimportant. One of our major offerings was the techniques and understandings of gestalt therapy. This orientation helps a person become aware of himself—body, mind and feelings—in his particular life space. A person is enabled to explore his space, how he perceives that space and how he can be responsible for his actions. Gestalt therapy does not put on the other person the standards of the counsellor. It was a very useful resource for us. It gave our students important new skills.

d) We became aware of the tremendous struggle about authority in Indian culture and related problems of responsibility and freedom. One of the theoretical statements that was helpful for us and our students was the transactional analysis ideas of parent-adult-child relationships.



The p.a.c. model accurately described the situation in which many of our students found themselves. There is always a 'parent' speaking to the 'child' in the Indian culture no matter what his situation or status. In our training sessions the 'child' within the students constantly waited for the 'parent' (the teacher or us) to speak. As we explored this we discovered that ministers wait for the bishop, teachers wait for the dean or headmaster, and students wait for the teacher. In public life, particularly in governmental life, there is always a 'parent' at the next level to whom all decisions must be referred. While collecting a few books from customs we discovered that there are at least five levels of 'parents' above the man you initially meet who must give their approval. In our training sessions with teachers we were particularly interested to discover that for the most part the teacher plays the parent-role and assumes the students will all be children. Even in college there is relatively little adult-to-adult relationship or collegiality about the learning process. The state and national syllabi are giant 'parents'. It felt to us as if this situation in the educational institutions must change if the kind of creativity, freedom and taking of responsibility is to emerge which is the necessary prerequisite for building community and achieving personal growth.

e) We live in a western culture where guilt and a sense of conscience predominate. We were unprepared for the sense in which India is a culture where honour and shame predominate. Many pastoral counselling problems revolved around the expectation on the part of the parishioners that the pastor would do anything including bribery and cheating in order to maintain the honour of the particular family and the honour of the church. One pastor role-played for us the situation where a parishioner comes in and asks for a birth certificate for his son. As the pastor is filling out the form the man says, 'Please change the birth date so that my son will appear two years younger.' (This is necessary because after the age of 26 no one can get a government job.) The pastor says, 'I can't do that.' Whereupon the parishioner gets terribly angry and explodes. There is a great scene and the parishioner leaves. Our trainees said this was a very common sort of situation and obviously a very puzzling one for the Christian theological viewpoint which takes guilt and conscience more seriously than this kind of honour and necessity of maintaining the extended family.

f) In almost all of the people we met and worked with we felt there was a great acceptance of what is and what has been given. This is in contrast to the American scene where everything is up for grabs, where the scientific method is constantly being applied, and where there is a restlessness always present. Given our 'counselling' stance we listened to persons and made no attempt to change anything which would have been a foolish effort in the first place. Yet when we did listen and when trust developed in our relationships then we began to hear anger and frustration and a sense of being stifled in the churches and in the educational institutions. Teachers felt they could not do anything except what was in the syllabus. Ministers felt they could do nothing but what was prescribed by the bishop and the synod. Lay people felt they could do nothing but what had been handed down by the minister. Students and teachers felt they had to fulfil what 'Big Daddy' said. It would seem that in this generation of 'future shock' somehow the growth and potential in each human being ought to be freed both for

himself and for his community. Certainly the lock-step of an educational system which is bound to a central syllabus frustrated everybody we met and yet almost no one was willing to take the risk to change it. Some of the Christian schools obviously have begun to do more than anyone else and there is ferment now in Tamilnadu to change the state syllabus. When we asked, 'Well, what are you doing about it?' the answer almost always was 'Nothing. I can do nothing.' This needs to be translated into 'I won't do anything.' When clusters of college teachers discussed this issue for a while, they found mutual support. Something will begin to happen when they find each other. We met a very few teachers who were slowly working in the committees, discovering that change could take place if they were willing to take the risk of presenting their real thoughts and feelings and not what they felt was expected by the 'parent' in that particular situation.

#### IV. Conclusion

We felt honoured to have had this part in the beginnings of the Christian Counselling Centre of Vellore which is supported by the Church of South India, the Mar Thoma Church, the Lutheran Church, the Methodist Church and the Roman Catholic Church. It seemed to us to be a very appropriate and timely kind of resource center for training in skills. Skill training seems particularly necessary for India just now. The Centre is a model whereby people from America and other countries could, for a limited time, share their skills in interpersonal relationship, counselling, in community work, in organizational work, in interpretative and communication work and in learning theory and methods. We hope that the various mission boards will take seriously this kind of skill training centre in contrast to some of the other forms of work in the past. Such centres, both at their location and in response to all kinds of requests from schools, churches and hospitals, could perform a significant service.

We met many frustrated missionaries some of whom were leaving for good. The most frustrated missionaries had very limited skills to offer. We have known for a long time that a doctor or an agricultural expert had functional skills to share and thus access to the people. Ministers and teachers in this generation need skills. This would give them a sense of functional helpfulness which the institutions of India desperately need. We need to share skills with Indian professionals which will allow appropriate indigenous meanings, innovations in practice, necessary learnings in institutional life to emerge for India.

We believe that functional skill training honours the culture in which the persons live and allows meanings to develop out of common experiencing in that culture. This has not always been the case when we have given our meanings to people without taking seriously the experiences of that particular culture. If communication is genuinely increased, if feelings are taken seriously, if listening goes on, if common projects are engaged in, then there is an experiencing which allows the unique meanings of a particular culture or particular community or particular church or a particular school or a particular person to emerge and to be celebrated by all.

We were honoured, enriched and humbled by the experience. We enjoyed the persons we met. We felt a warm response. We would like to return some day.

#### A Correction

The name of the author of the article, *The Mode of the Church's Presence in a Changing World*, in the last issue is Yesuratnam and not Yesupatham—Ed.



# Asia and the Ecumenical Revolution

DR. A. J. GEORGE, *Neyyoor*

## Asia and the Ecumenical Issues

It is no accident of circumstances that the movement for united action by Christian peoples throughout the earth got the strongest support from missionaries in Asia and Christian leaders of Asia. Asia has a variety of contenders with Christianity for its religious loyalty and many of these contenders have hoary traditions based on sound philosophical foundations which today are appealing to intellectuals in the West. To be effective in Asia, a Christian statement of faith should be intelligible to Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim as well as Marxist and Humanist as a tenable, valid and consistent position even if not so overwhelmingly convincing as it used to be assumed.

The current trend towards establishment of national ecumenical churches is likely to defeat the objectives of the Asian Churches. The problem is particularly acute in India because it has to deal at the same time with all the five challengers unlike other Churches faced with only one or other of the challengers to Christianity. While Asians can and must sympathise with the run-away car of secularisation and humanisation that has captivated the World Council of Churches at Uppsala they cannot endorse them because of their partial irrelevance in Asia. Asia needs help in thinking through to their foundations and in revamping Christian institutions and practices on the same revolutionary scale that obtained at the Jerusalem Council where Judaisers had to give way.

Moreover, Asia has five-eighths of the world's population of which only one-twentyfifth is Christian; seventeen-twentieth of all non-Christians live in Asia. Therefore it is not enough to create national ecumenical churches uniting episcopal and non-episcopal churches practising infant baptism. No indigenisation is possible until we are willing to restate our faith in terms intelligible to Asia within the framework of a broad Christian consensus which should include Orthodox-Catholic Churches at one end and Baptist Pentecostal Churches at the other end. If the Western Churches are too slow to discuss in depth the theological issues involved in such a wider reconciliation, Indian Churches could take the initiative in an Orthodox-Baptist integration as a tactical move to force the issue, even as the Antiochian Church did in ordaining Paul as an evangelist.

If recognising the presence of the Lord in an image is idolatry, how does recognising the presence of the Lord in Jesus son of Joseph of Nazareth or the consecrated bread cease to be idolatry? How dare we justify to Muslim or Hindu our position on idolatry? How is a dialogue possible with Marxists or Humanists without conceding the possibility of divinity being a mere collective evolutionary or progressive projection of collective super ego of groups of mankind and making this postulate the minimum definition of divinity? The intra-ecumenical dialogue between fundamentalists and liberals or between liturgists and charismatics have to be resolved too if we are to make any intelligent effort towards ecumenical evangelism. The fundamentalist approach is a key issue in resolving contradictions of Koran to Biblical positions. Discussions around the periphery of issues may appear to produce consensus but they are futile. Slogans like secularisation and humanisation seem to claim that Marxism and Humanism is really Christianity, which is very ironical but not honest. We need in the ecumenical movement a leadership willing to define issues and face issues honestly. Importing American organisational effi-

ciency into ecumenical structures will not paper over vital issues facing us.

Thus Asia poses a question for the future direction of the ecumenical movement and the ecumenical movement will persist in peripheral Western concerns only if it has already made up its mind to create a Western Christian ghetto mentality in world affairs, ignoring its own future.

## Asia and the World Order

Irrespective of the actual population in the eighties, the Asian share of the world population is expected to level off at seventy per cent, a share which Asia always had until the explosive development of the European population from 1500 to 1900 which increased it to almost 40% of world population. Asia expects a voice in world affairs commensurate with her population not with a view to dictate to the nations on other continents but because her own cultures and civilisations are far too variegated to have a common thrust except in the negative sense of non-Christian or non-white. Given the Western boasts about the sacredness of the individual and priceless heritage of democracy, one would expect a ready endorsement for elected representation on United Nations General Assembly and widening Security Council to have the necessary representation from all national governments, retaining as a matter of course the veto.

For some reason or other Christian nations balk at the idea of granting Asians the principle of one man, one vote in world affairs. The days when Stalin used to cavil at the unrepresentative nature of the general assembly of the United Nations has become a mere past to Russian leaders. Having noted that the slogan of the First International Workingmen's Association, 'Workers of the world, unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains' would inevitably create a world where non-whites and Asians would predominate, Russian leaders are in a hurry to promote the slogan, 'Socialism within national borders', knowing full well that they are holding to 16% of the world's real estate bequeathed to them by Russian Imperialism and the Capitalist System.

While communist leaders are reneging on their promises, it is the humanists of the Western world and scientists who are leading the push towards planning for an equitable global economic order. In spite of the opposition of Atlantic and Soviet alliances to the creation of a democratic world order and creation of machinery for global economic planning, a consensus is developing in this direction. The recent Moscow agreement for a Soviet-American condominium in world affairs is an unhappy opposition to the emerging consensus on world affairs. Whether there will be an open confrontation between Asia and Soviet-American ambitions towards a condominium or there will be a remote-controlled effort to engineer a split between the would-be condominium partners over South Africa or Israel is a matter for Asian chancelleries to decide. But I do not foresee Asian leaders knuckling down to U.S.-U.S.S.R. combine and I can prophesy a frightful war in the eighties or steady escalation of conventional and guerilla warfares between White Christian nations and Asian Non-Christian nations without being a prophet in the traditional sense of the term. If White Christian nations have made up their minds to resist a democratic world order and global planning, perhaps they should stop calling themselves Christian.



and prepare for the Third World War with diplomatic bargaining with Russians and Africans for a common coalition against Asians.

The West would have to sacrifice democracy for a stable alliance with Russians and racism for an enduring alliance with Africans and ten years is too short a time to prepare public opinion in either direction. It is easier for the West to accept the principles of global democracy and global planning without prejudice to national sovereignty and then negotiate a workable arrangement over the next thirty years. If the Christian leaders of the West prefer to drift, Asian leaders will also drift towards a conflagration in South Africa isolating Africa from the West and undermining the stability of United States as a world power.

Hence it would have been wiser for the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches to re-educate Christian opinion than allot funds for revolutionaries in South Africa. The key to such a re-education is with Southern Baptist Convention and the Central Committee should give top priority for this issue in its September session.

### Dialogue with Humanists and Marxists

Honesty in any irenical dialogue depends on one's willingness to spell out the differences rather than demonstrate an unrealistic and false identity which seems evident in the slogans, 'Secularisation' and 'Humanisation' and argue that the purpose of Christianity is to make man more of a man. Classical categories mesmerised the councilmen to ask the wrong questions about the nature of divinity and humanity of Christ, forgetting that the first five verses of John or Genesis second chapter and innumerable other references confirm the biblical doctrine of the partial divinity of man. Then the debate should have been about the two natures of man expounded in the seventh chapter of Romans and the third chapter of John.

It is for this reason that I had proposed a study on the Nature of Man only to find the study run aground on the Christological debates very much like an old gramophone record repeating a section of the song on the disc. The absurdity of the extreme position adopted at Uppsala is becoming more evident to all and sundry, I hope. The Hindu intellectual tradition of claiming identity of diametrically opposite forces is at least more honest in propounding a paradox; definition of Christianity as the process of secularisation or humanisation is naivete par excellence or sheer knavery.

Under the Christian viewpoint man is partly divine and struggles to avoid facing this divine light because of the law of the flesh in his members and the humanisation that Christian thinkers talk about is the need man has to obey his divine insights to bring about his best self-fulfilment. But such usage is misleading and merely evades issues to be discussed for a few rounds of discussion with humanists and marxists. Our discussion with them would have to centre around this divine discontent in man and the actual existence of divinity as a personal god; the average humanist and marxist might agree to define god as a shorthand expression for the evolutionary or progressive element in collective super-ego of mankind, the devil being defined as regressive or reactionary forces in psycho-social evolution. A Christian should make an honest effort to convince humanists that this phenomena in the collective super-ego does reflect beings in another dimension.

With marxists Christian apologists would have to prove the bonafides of their social conscience. Unfortunately in following Paul in his substantiation that obedience to Torah was not essential for our salvation we threw out the baby with the bath water. Paul himself expounds the lawful use of the law in the first chapter of the First Letter to Timothy, verses 8-11, namely Torah is for the lawless and

disobedient and not for the just who depend on the grace and power of Christ in no way conflicting with the demand of Jesus to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees.

Now, Torah demands tithing for the seven years in the third year and handing over the income of the seventh and jubilee years for the use of the orphans, widows, strangers and the poor working out to 16% social security tax. Moreover, Numbers 36: 4 suggests reassignment of inheritance by lots within each tribe as the normative rule in Israel. From other Jewish literature also we know peace-time taxation was limited to one-sixth of income rising up to two-sixths in the event of war.

Roman legalists and Christian theologians have taken advantage of Pauline tirades against Judaisers to escape from the high taxation inherent in Torah and thus emasculate the Christian community. Forces from many directions are compelling Christians to appreciate the superiority of Torah as fundamental law to maintain cohesion of any society, and marxism is one of them. It is instructive to remember that Marx was attracted to Christianity and accepted baptism before exploding with the iconoclastic demands of his well-developed social conscience.

### Dialogue with other Religions

Who bears the sins of the world

Is the king of the world. (Tao Te Ching 73: 11,12.)

The above passage indicates a prophetic insight of Lo Tse into the nature of reality which is rather profound. The Upanishads anticipate Jesus in the statement: 'I and my father are one', and Gautama anticipates the injunction, 'Be ye perfect as your father in heaven is perfect'. The Chandogya Upanishad establishes identity of light inside man as identical with divine light and prepares our mind for the Johannine analysis.

How dare we claim inactivity of the Spirit in other scriptures? We can use those scriptures if we honestly acknowledge the dominical doctrine of the scriptures which acknowledges free interpretation of divine will in accordance with the needs of the times. Resolution or fundamentalism is vital before any attempt at dialogue. Only within dominical doctrine of scriptures can we resolve the contradictions between scriptures. Thus within the framework of supremacy, sufficiency and decisiveness of the scriptures of Old and New Testaments, we could acknowledge and use Koran, Tripitaka and Prastanatraya in our contacts with Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus.

The doctrine of partial divinity of man thoroughly expounded alone will open the eyes of Muslims while the Hindu requires the discipline of Torah to escape from total relativism. The Jews who have suffered atrociously under Christian hands would continue to disregard the claims of Jesus until Christians themselves return to obedience and honour for Torah. In these days of search after ecumenical civilisation the church does have to offer some cultural stability in a world of relativism and why not Jewish culture which will bring the white man and the black man before the throne of God in humility?

Torah provides the perfect balance between Muslim opposition to idolatry and the need of the Hindu mind to preserve its rituals, and Torah could even be a vehicle of national integration for India. Today Christians constitute 25% of world population and are under compulsion to provide some cohesive cultural framework for a new global civilisation.

The Christian missionary will not reach his audience as long as he is unaware of their psychological differences and the message of their scriptures. Reading of religious scriptures give us a major insight into the nature of their followers. Koran and Tao Te Ching indicate different wavelengths in thinking processes. So are the Bible and Prastanatraya.



One key to the psychological differences is the preferential option to dwell on one or other of the three infantile phases of mental development namely oral-narcissistic phase, anal-compulsive phase, genetic-oedipal phase. If we watch Indian civilisation it shows a greater narcissistic delight with consequent apathy on frustration while Chinese civilisation shows compulsive phenomena with running amok temper tantrums on frustration, and Western people indicate different phases of oedipal complex with the paranoid reaction pattern on frustration. This is naturally reflected in their respective apprehensions of divinity. Here there is a large element of collective projection and this should be accepted as a valid framework for inter-religious dialogue. The distortions in apprehension of divinity by different

peoples can thus be explained giving us a better focus on the nature of divinity. Just as we have refined techniques for measuring distances in spite of distortions of vision with superior methods or instruments, even so mankind's collective apprehension of divinity will improve with consciousness of this distortion.

It is my humble belief that the Christian congregation at worship—if we follow directions of Ephesians Two, First Corinthians Twelve to Fourteen and Romans Twelve suggest the analogy of building up the Temple of God with ourselves as living stones chipping away our surfaces to fit one another, is the primitive edition of therapeutic group. If therapeutic group becomes the framework for worship, we will have one more approach to other religions.

(To be concluded)

## The Late Rev. Meshach Peter of Vellore

(Sketch of an Advocate for Union)

The late Rev. Meshach Peter was the son of Rev. John Peter of Tindivanam, S.I.U.C. He was ordained on 17th January 1898, and was installed at Tindivanam after his father. After some years he was appointed to independent charge as an Indian Missionary at Wandiwash (1907-1914). He was then called from Wandiwash to Vellore to be in charge of the Evangelistic Campaign. It was then that the great meetings of Dr. Sherwood Eddy came off in September 1915, which were held for four days in the Town Hall, Vellore. Mr. Peter worked along with Dr. Sherwood Eddy, and was his translator. He was also the translator for Dr. Stanley Jones on his visits to India. He was known as a sparkling translator.

In 1915 he was made the first Indian Chairman of the Western Circle, which post he held up to 1936. This Circle was by far the largest of all the Circles and connected to the Vellore Congregation.

When the first General Assembly met in the year 1924, it was like a parliament of more than a hundred members of whom 41 were Missionaries. It is noteworthy that the first Indian Missionary was unanimously elected as the first Indian President of the General Assembly.

Ever since Meshach Peter was called to be the Indian Missionary allotted to the Evangelistic Campaign Work, he devoted himself to the task of church union keeping in touch with the various European and English Missionaries and Bishops of different denominations. Thus he became one of the pioneers of the Church Union Movement, joining with neighbouring Presbyterian Churches in the Synods of Arcot and Madras. He toured all over Tamil Nadu, Travancore, Jaffna, Calicut, Miraj, Poona, Jubbulpur, Bombay, etc., and preached about the 'Forces of Church Union'. He partook in the Presbyterian Synod of Bombay representing the South India United Church from 12th to 19th November 1917. In 1919 he attended the Tranqubar meeting where members of several Churches assembled to discuss the Church Union Movement, and supported the cause of Church Union. A Union Committee was formed in Tranqubar in the same year. The addresses to inaugurate negotiations were given by Bishop Azariah on behalf of the Anglican Church and by Rev. Meshach Peter on behalf of the South India United Church.

The General Assembly at the South India United Church was held at Calicut on the 27th September 1933, when, as President of the General Assembly, the Rev. Meshach Peter presided and delivered an address on 'The

future of the Church of South India—Its Lay Forces for Christ'.

Meshach Peter was the first Indian Moderator of the General Assembly 1931-1933. He was also the Secretary of the Madras Presbyterian Synod of the South India United Church and Madras Church Council. Later he became the President of the Madras Church Council.

Meshach Peter saw the fruit of his labour for Church Union and witnessed during his very life time the inauguration of the Church of South India in 1947. He was one of those who took part in the laying of hands on the first 14 Bishops assembled at St. George's Cathedral, Madras.

It may not be out of place to mention here a few words about the late Mrs. Lizzie Peter. Mrs. Peter greatly assisted her husband in his work to build up the Church at Wandiwash, and helped him in all his tour programmes. She took up the Zenana work with pride and joy both at Wandiwash and at Vellore. She was the Supervisor of the Zenana work at Vellore and acted as its Superintendent in place of Miss A. E. Hancock. She also helped her husband in re-writing sermons and in all manuscript and translation work.

Meshach Peter was not sick or confined to bed before he died though he was then 95 years old. On the afternoon of the 14th December 1959 he went out with his last son Martin Stephen, daughter-in-law and grand-children for shopping at Bangalore. They returned late in the evening. Just two hours after his dinner, he called his son and daughter-in-law to his bedside and said:—'No more am I feeling uneasy—I am going away; God is calling me.' He said nothing else. A few minutes after this utterance, he peacefully breathed his last at 9 p.m. at the residence of his younger daughter, Dr. Miss J. M. Peter, at Benson Town, Bangalore. His remains were brought to Vellore and interned at the Government Cemetery by the side of his wife—much as he had desired and prayed. Many months after his death, one of his old diaries was found and in it he had written: 'Sacred Memo. for children. In my morning devotion at Royapuram (1954) Psalm 30: 5—'In His pleasure is life' (Psalm 31: 6) In Thy hands I commend my spirits for Thou hast redeemed me. O Lord, Thou God of truth.'

'May a simple tombstone slab mark the grave with name and age.'

—Contributed by the REV. CHRISTOPHER PETER.



## Letters to the Editor

### A PRESBYTER'S LOSS OF FAITH IN THE CHURCH

Sir,

It is two years since I assisted at any Church service and during this period I have avoided going into a church as much as possible. I have given up the Church since I have lost my faith in the Church. In this letter I wish to state my reasons for making such a statement.

Bishop Edwin F. Lee of the Malaya Annual Conference, 1937, said to me when I joined the Conference on two years' trial, 'A trial is two ways. We have placed you on trial, but you have also to try this Conference for two years.' I took his word seriously and declined to continue in the Conference from 1939. The Bishop and members of the Conference felt upset, but I had weighed the Conference on two points before I made this decision.

1. In 1938 the Rev. D. John who held in his hand a solemn written promise from the Mission Treasurer that he would be paid Malayan Rs. 60 p.m. on his retirement was voted a pension of only Rs. 13 per month.

2. A lay American Missionary interfered when I refused to baptise teachers in our mission schools who were trying to escape retrenchment by becoming Christians.

In 1942, after studying for my Post-Graduate degree I decided to go back to Malaya and to join the Annual Conference because I had by then begun to think that the Church was the only organisation which offered a positive programme. Looking back now, I know that the Holy Spirit took me to Malaya to place very heavy responsibilities on my young shoulders during the Japanese war which began a few months after I landed in Malaya with my wife and two children.

My doubts regarding the Church which began in 1939 have, however, never been put aside. Whenever I was riding high on a wave of optimism that the Church is the only constructive organization in the world something invariably happened which revived my doubts.

In 1953, when I was in Ceylon working as a Methodist minister in Hatton, I had just got over a breakdown of my physical, mental and spiritual health. God, in His great mercy, revived my soul by doing wonders in Maskeliya and, when the Hindus sincerely sought baptism, two missionaries thought that the Hindus were being bribed to turn to Christianity. They even asked the converts this question. Finally the Synod of the Methodist Church felt that it was work done by an Indian among Indians whereas the Church in Ceylon should work for the Ceylonese. All my doubts of the Church returned and I quit the paid ministry of the Church in 1956.

For many years after my return to India I had strange and unhappy feelings whenever I went into a Church building. In spite of that, after some years of rebellion, I decided to assist the ministers of the Church. Once again I faced acute unhappiness when the caste disturbances in Kerala, and later in Trichy, shook the Church of South India. Caste observances within the Church shook me and hurt me because I took a stand in 1933 in Puthur, Trichy, when I went with the Harijan Christians to receive Holy Communion in a predominantly Nadar congregation. My daughters, all three of them, are married outside my caste. I know that many other Indian Christians have taken a strong stand against caste, but yet we hear euphonies on caste and men speak proudly of caste. Even this can be borne, but I

cannot bear the idea of brethren in the ministry practising caste. If this happens—and it has happened—then there is no meaning in saying that the CSI is a Christian organisation. Call it by any other name but please do not drag the name of our dear Master to this level.

Bangalore.

V. B. PARANJOTHY.

Dear Editor,

I happened to see Sri Cyril Isaiah's letter to you in the July issue of the *South India Churchman*. I do not know why he begins the letter by describing the reasons for the resignation of the first two Bishops of the North Kerala Diocese. According to him the first Bishop resigned because he was an Anglican and did not know how to deal with Presbyterians. I leave it to the judgment of the readers who knew Bishop Stuart Smith. The second Bishop resigned and went away in search of Mediterranean climate. Was it in search of a mediterranean climate that he moved his residence from Calicut to Feroke and from Feroke to Vaniyankulam? Bishop Lipp himself had published a statement about his resignation and we all know fully well the sad story. I am glad he admits that the present Bishop did not run away. If the Synod Officers will publish Mr. Wilfred's reports, the truth will come out.

It is true that the Diocese was being administered by a Committee appointed by the Synod from October 1970 to June 1972. The members of the Committee were elected representatives of the Pastorates and not Bishop's nominees as he says. It was due to the result of the law suits conducted by the writer and his group. The truth is that all the suits he and his friends were conducting against the diocese were dismissed and all the steps taken by the diocese for integration were upheld. Most of his sweeping statements in the article are contradictory, confusing and false. I would like to add that his claims of preserving the Basel Mission tradition and heritage was blown up when he arranged with special permission the marriage of his only daughter with a young man of the Basel Mission community to be solemnised at the St. Mary's Church, Calicut, which is the only ex-Anglican Church in the diocese which still preserves High Church practices. He is maligning the Bishops of the Church and them only, because he knows fully well that they cannot and will not retort.

Calicut.

(G. T. WILLIAMS).

[All readers and members of the CSI must feel sad about this controversy. They would feel even more distressed to hear that the latest development is a printed notice of a move by a group or congregation to leave the CSI. While there may be circumstances in which secessions cannot be helped, especially because of the unreasonableness and self-will of certain individuals, Church history shows also how imagination and the willingness to sit even with those who are held to be ungodly out of concern for fellowship in the Church could have prevented many of them. It would be a sad commentary on the resources of wisdom and grace in the CSI if, in this year of the Silver Jubilee, the Synod leadership will be content to 'let things take their own course' in a part of N. Kerala Diocese. Action for reconciliation seems to be indicated.—Ed.]



# A Course for Leaders of Lay Training

(CLLT-Summer 1972)

A Course for Leaders of Lay Training was organised under the auspices of the Tamil Nad Christian Council by the Committee on work among the Laity from 7th April to 6th May, 1972. The aim was to help the Lay leaders to see the needs of the society in terms of Christian action. And the triple objectives were that such trained leaders would (a) help 'the Laity in formation' to grow as a reflecting community, (b) act responsibly in the society as witnesses of Jesus Christ and, (c) be instrumental in helping society to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Course was organised on the basic educational principle that 'learning is living'. Therefore it was important to lead the course participants through experiences and this was made possible in the visits to several 'Centres of Renewal' in India such as: Laity Centres, Madurai; Christian Counselling Centre, Vellore; The Community Service Centre, Madras; The Ecumenical Social and Industrial Institute, Durgapur; Indian Social Institute, St. Mark's Cathedral and Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore; The Ecumenical Christian Centre, Whitefield, and the India Sunday School Union, Coonoor, which is in the process of organising itself into a Council of Christian Education.

These centres found resource persons—specialists in their own fields and provided expert leadership—the Master Equipppers.

Such leaders and the topics they dealt with were:

Bishop George Devadoss ('Go ye into the World'); Dr. R. Paulraj ('The Theology of Involvement'); Prof. D. A. Thangasamy and Dr. Samuel Amirtham ('That the World may be saved'); Rev. Carlos Welch & team ('Group Dynamics'); Dr. M. Abel & team ('Rapid Social Change; Urbanisation and the Message of Geneva '66'); Mr. Alexander Devasunder & team ('Industrialisation, Salvation & Humanisation'); Canon S. K. Bishwas & team ('The City Mission'); Fr. H. Volken & team ('Develop-

ment, Communication and programme making'); Mr. G. R. Karat & team ('Church in the World, Vatican II and Uppsala '68'); Rev. Alexander D. John & team ('City Mission'); Rev. M. A. Thomas & team ('The Process of Secularisation and Worship in the Secular age'); Rev. N. Daniel and Miss W. Taylor ('Projects in Adult Christian Education').

Bibliography was provided by the respective leaders and modern methods and techniques of communication were used in the course.

The course participants came from all the six Tamil Dioceses in the CSI, South India, from the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church and from the Tamil District of the Society of Jesus making a total of twelve and making the composition of the group an Ecumenical one. The average age of the group was 35 and the group had a balancing proportion of presbyters and lay men and they were mostly graduates.

Evaluating the course at the end of the one month period, the participants missed a session on 'Ethics and decision making', wanted to undergo intensive training in a centre of their interest for specialization and contribution to team work; recommended similar CLLT courses for fresh batches and for a longer duration; asked for half yearly meetings of Laity Trainers; requested news letters and suggested a separate budget for Laity Training work in the churches. The leaders in different centres themselves felt that such a course as this should be available to regional councils, other than Tamil Nad Christian Council.

Our thanks are due to Bishop Solomon Doraisamy, the President of TNCC, all the Bishops and Chairmen of Church Councils, the Course leaders and to the NCC for helping us in programming and financing the Course.

REV. D. POTHIRAJULU  
(Convenor).

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## A Certificate Course in Islamic Studies

The Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, ran a six-week preliminary certificate course in Islamic Studies for a batch of ten students from various Churches and denominations of South India. Six of them were Catholic dayscholars from St. John's Seminary, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. Three residential and also scholarship-holding students of this Institution were from St. Thomas Church of India, Tiruvalla, Kerala, C.S.I. Madhya Kerala Diocese and C.S.I. Karimnagar, Diocese of Dornakal, Andhra Pradesh.

Sister Ruth Nirmal of the C.S.I. St. Luke's Hindustani Church, Hyderabad, Medak Diocese, was the only woman who attended the course.

The course of study consisted of elementary Urdu, Arabic, Islamics and Christian Approach to the Muslim. The teaching staff was headed by Dr. Sam V. Bhajjan, M.A., M.O.L., B.D., Ph.D., Director of the Institute, who taught Arabic and Islamics. He has experience of work among Muslims not only in India but also in Iran, Lebanon and Pakistan. The Rev. T. I. Chinniah, Presbyter of the C.S.I., St. Luke's Hindustani Church, Hyderabad, taught Islamics and led the students in their daily morning devotions.

Rev. Ameerullah Alvi, a retired Presbyter of the C.S.I. Diocese of Medak, Andhra Pradesh, himself a Muslim convert from the famous Qadriya Order, taught Christian Approach to the Muslim.

Syed Ahmad Hasan Naqavi, a Muslim Maulvi, taught Urdu to the students.

Besides these members of the staff, there are some able and experienced specialists, spread all over India, who are members of the permanent staff of this Institution.

There were four regular classes of 45 minutes each (with an interval of 15 minutes in between the periods) from 8.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon, every day except Sunday.

Weekly tests were conducted by Dr. Bhajjan especially in Arabic, with the specific idea of familiarizing the students with the Quranic words and phrases used by Muslims in their prayers and writings.

On a Friday the students were taken by the Director to the famous Mecca Masjid near Charminar, Hyderabad, to

(Continued on cover page iii)





## **WCC Race Commission says Break Investment Links with S. Africa**

Geneva—The Commission of the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) of the World Council of Churches has urged that all investments in South Africa be withdrawn. The Commission, which met in New York, April 23-28, will be making specific recommendations on this point at the policy-making Central Committee of the WCC which meets in the Netherlands in August. If accepted this move would represent a further step in WCC thinking, which maintained at the 4th Assembly in Uppsala in 1968 that investments should be withdrawn 'from all institutions that perpetuate racism.'

The Commission members, who come from 13 countries on six continents, instructed the PCR staff to publicise the extent and nature of the involvement of multi-national corporations and banks in the economy of Southern Africa. The Commission decided to 'select targets for appropriate action by the WCC, its member churches and related bodies.' Share holder action and confrontation were recognised as 'a stage prior to withdrawal.'

Commission members heard that the minimum goal of \$500,000 for the Special Fund to Combat Racism has been passed and decided to request the Central Committee to raise the target to a minimum of \$1,000,000. So far grants totalling \$400,000 have been made to the humanitarian programme of 32 groups of the racially oppressed and organisations supporting the victims of racial injustice.

## **Church Leaders Speak on German-Soviet Treaty**

Geneva—The Bishops of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany (VELKD), meeting in Hanover at the end of April, have spoken frankly of the difficulties in their parishes provoked by the debate on the German-Soviet treaty. After the meeting the signatories of the 'Declaration of 25', which came out in favour of the signing, underlined that the declaration was written from their personal convictions and was not an official statement of the Church.

The General Secretary of the Dutch Reformed Church, Dr. E. H. Landsman, in a statement said: 'We hope to act in the spirit of the Conference of

European Churches and stand behind our Christian brothers in West Germany who urge their government to ratify the treaties'.  
EPS.

## **Churches and Action Groups Put Action Programme to UNCTAD**

The churches and the action groups back the idea of special help for the least developed nations. They also ask all developed nations to give 0.7% of their GNP in official aid by 1975 in the form of grants or loans repayable over 50 years, with a 10-year grace period and no interest.  
EPS.

## **New Zealand Anglicans Reject Women Priests**

Geneva—The General Synod of the Anglican Church in New Zealand has rejected by a narrow margin a proposal to ordain women to the priesthood. The synod's lay members, 64 men and 1 woman, voted 41 to 24 in favour of the proposal, but the clergy group rejected it by a vote of 13 to 12.

Meanwhile in New York, a workshop of women Episcopalians in the New York area has called for women to be ordained. In expressing a rationale for ordination of women, the workshop rejected as 'spurious' the arguments that the move would violate Episcopal tradition, threaten ecumenical co-operation with the Roman Catholic Orthodox churches or pose 'an economic threat in a crowded profession.'

EPS.

## **Anglican/Methodist Scheme Rejected**

London—The Church of England meeting in General Synod has again rejected the proposed scheme of union with the Methodist Church. The Synod gave the plan a 65.1% overall majority, almost 10% below the 75% the scheme needed for acceptance. The Methodist Church has twice voted in favour of the union plan, which has been discussed between the two churches for nearly 25 years. Union between the two churches was originally proposed in a sermon by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, in 1946.

The Present Archbishop, Dr. Michael

Ramsey, proposed the motion in favour of union and said amid loud applause: 'I pray for "yes"'. When the vote failed he made it clear he would not retire

because the scheme had not passed. 'I don't think this is the last time we shall be voting on the scheme,' he added. But he said he thought there would be no new initiative from either Church: 'There is bound to be a time for reflection.' The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Greet, Secretary of the Methodist Conference, said the Synod's vote was a great set-back to the Christian cause.

EPS.

## **WCC/Roman Catholic Co-operation must be Intensified, says Working Group**

Geneva—Co-operation between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches must not only continue 'but must be intensified', according to the Joint Working Group of the two bodies which met in Rome, May 29-June 2. The group noted, however, that although membership in the WCC is under active study by the Roman Catholic Church 'it is not expected that such an application will be made in the near future.'

The Joint Working Group noted that Christian credibility is most seriously questioned in the fields of service and development where the scandal of division 'is frequently most blatant.' The group expressed the conviction that there is a great deal of meaningful ecumenical collaboration possible in this area.

EPS.

## **New Conflict Erupts between Church and State in South Africa : Blake Comments**

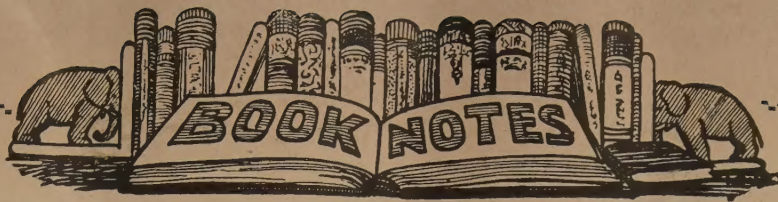
Cape Town—Three leading South African Churchmen were arrested here on June 5 and charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act, following student protests. The Dean of Cape Town, the Very Rev. Edward King; Theo Kotze of the Christian Institute of Southern Africa; and the Rev. Bernard Wrangmore of the Mission to Seamen were arrested on the steps of St. George's Cathedral after refusing to move aside.

Inside the Cathedral several hundred students had taken refuge from baton-swinging police and dogs who had broken up a crowd waiting to protest

(Continued on cover page 3)

[AUGUST 1972]





## JOURNEY INTO JOY

LESSLIE NEWBIGIN

(C.L.S.—I.S.P.C.K.)

Price Rs. 3.75

This book is the record of six talks given at the Christian Medical College, Vellore, in October 1971. The greater part of the audience was, we suppose, young; the talks reflect a loving understanding of the young, of their protest against the 'mess' of cruelty and injustice countenanced by 'the establishment'. The young in spirit, including those in the over-40 class (like Bishop Newbigin himself) will surely respond to his picture of Jesus as one whose life and death were 'one total protest against things as they are in the name of things as they ought to be'.

For this reader the central chapter is the third, 'NEW LIFE in the spirit'. Those who, with Jesus as their leader, are Soldiers in the 'Lamb's War', committed to HIS VISION of the Kingdom of God, are united in a fellowship of mutual trust and caring. The implications of this fellowship are worked out in the chapters which follow. There are some fine passages about

becoming a 'discriminating non-conformist', about the need for protest and witness not only against old evils such as caste discrimination and dowry, but equally against the 'monster', the 'harlot' and the 'false prophets' who appear in our own day no less than in the Book of Revelations, along with the 'faceless, thousand-headed Beast of Bureaucracy'. The witness is costly, it is a taking of the Cross; yet life in the fellowship is truly a journey into joy, a foretaste of the fuller life of the City of God.

The contrast between this fellowship of the Spirit and all too common attitudes within the Christian community is brought out. 'The Christian hope is often presented as a purely selfish hope that I, and perhaps some of my friends, will escape from hell to heaven, out of this world into another. But the great emphasis in the Bible is that Christ is coming back to *this* world to reign. The promise of God is centred on the doing of his will *on earth*. 'Joy is not to be found in possession (even of heaven) but in sharing. Bishop Newbigin does not quote William Blake, but he recalls to me the poet's lines:

He that grasps to  
himself a joy

Does the winged life destroy.  
But he who kisses the joy as it flies  
Lives in Eternity's sunrise.

I have one or two questions which do not affect my gratitude for this book. I am not sure that the selfish escapist attitudes in much Christian life can be fully accounted for either by ideas of *Maya* or by western missionaries' acts of இரட்சிப்பு. Such attitudes are far too widespread in places where these factors did not operate. Are they partially, unconsciously, rooted in what Erich From calls 'The fear of freedom'? Another query: this book avoids controversy; yet it is noticeable that while the two references to Marx and Mao draw out positive lessons from their thought, the brief references to Karma and Maya emphasize a negative aspect of these doctrines, which might not be acceptable, standing alone, to the best Hindu thinkers.

Please read this book carefully, prayerfully. May it help us all to seek afresh that fellowship with one another in the Spirit which will enable us to live 'in Eternity's sunrise' of joy.

MARJORIE SYKES.

(Courtesy: Madras Diocesan Notes and News)

### Trends—(Continued from p. 15)

against police brutality. Demonstrations began June 2 with a march to protest apartheid in the nation's educational System. The protest came under savage police attack.

Meanwhile in South Africa the Rt. Rev. Alphaeus Zulu, Bishop of Zululand and a President of the World Council of Churches, in a memorial address at the University of Cape Town spoke of the inevitability of violence in South Africa. Well-known as a moderate and a critic of the WCC's grants to liberation movements, Bishop Zulu said the harshness of discrimination made a black man look simple and naive if he

continued to advocate the effectiveness of non-violence.

EPS.

### Indian Christian Encyclopaedia Published

Trichur, India—The first comprehensive book on Indian Christianity has just been published here. The volume, the *St. Thomas Christian Encyclopaedia* is a joint effort of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Mar Thoma Churches of India. It covers faith, liturgy, Scripture, cultural habits, Indian Christianity's contribution to art, architecture, language, literature, music, education and social service. The editorial ad-

visory board consisted of scholars representing all the major churches of India.

EPS.

### Church Role in Politics Underlined

Edinburgh—Ministers of the Church of Scotland have been urged to give a place in their sermons to the 'deepening awareness of politics as an area of Christian concern.' The appeal came from the General Assembly of the Church in response to the Church and Nation Committee's view that the Church should become more deeply involved in national and local politics.

EPS.

### A Certificate Course . . . . .—(Continued from page 15)

observe the most important Friday (midday) congregational prayer in which thousands of Muslims take part. Our visit was pre-arranged and therefore the authorities of the Mosque were most cordial in receiving us, a group of Christians.

In one of the periods Sayyada Mehrunnisa, M.A., Reader in Arabic, Women's College, Osmania University, Hyderabad, spoke to the students on the topic of 'Woman and her rights in Islam'. After her lecture a friendly discussion took place in which most of the students took part. This was the first time for the students to hear a Muslim lady speak on an Islamic topic.

Students were once taken to various Muslim localities to

distribute Christian literature. We enjoyed this outing as it gave us an opportunity to share the Gospel with others.

A special valedictory service was arranged on Sunday, 21st May, 1972, at 8-30 a.m. in St. Luke's Hindustani Church in which students were given their certificates. Rev. John A. Masilamani, Hony. Presbyter of the Church, brought a special message for the students.

The Institute has a good library with 7,000 volumes, which the students made good use of during their course. It is hoped that this six-week course will become an annual feature.

C. SADANANDAM

(a student)



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